

Running Head: Organizational Impacts of Employee Turnover

The Impacts of Employee Turnover for Haines City Fire & Rescue

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July 2009

CERTIFICATION STATEMENT

I hereby certify that this paper constitutes my own product, that where the language of others is set forth, quotation marks so indicate, and that appropriate credit is given where I have used the language, ideas, expressions, or writings of another.

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Abstract

This research project examined the impacts of employee turnover for Haines City Fire and Rescue. The problem was that for the past 14 years, Haines City Fire & Rescue has been experiencing a high level of employee turnover. The purpose of this research was to analyze the reasons behind this employee turnover.

A descriptive research method was used to analyze the reasons behind the employee turnover and answer the following questions: Why are employees leaving the organization? What are the safety impacts of employee turnover? What strategies or tools are available to address employee turnover? How is the organization impacted by this turnover? These questions were answered using a literature review, personal interviews and questionnaires.

Results found the primary reason for employees leaving the organization was the cost of benefits while the secondary reason was wages. Recommendations include increasing the wage for firefighter trainees, reducing the employee pension plan contribution, and researching flexible benefit plans to reduce employee out of pocket expenses.

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The Impacts of Employee Turnover for Haines City Fire & Rescue

Introduction

For the past 14 years, Haines City Fire & Rescue (HCF&R) has been experiencing a high level of employee turnover impacting the organization. HCF&R has already experienced five firefighter vacancies in 2009. This trend not only has financial impacts for the City of Haines City but also impacts the safety of the residents and firefighters. The lack of experienced firefighters, as reflected by this turnover trend, also leads to safety concerns for both current and future firefighters. Other levels of city government and HCF&R are also impacted by this trend.

A review of 64 personnel files shows that from 1995 to 2009, 53 percent of the HCF&R vacancies were attributed to employees who chose to leave the organization for a position with another fire agency. Some of these former employees listed very specific reasons such as benefits and wages as reasons for their resignations while others did not.

The purpose of this descriptive research project was to analyze the reasons behind the employee turnover and answer the following questions: Why are employees leaving the organization? What are the safety impacts of employee turnover? What strategies or tools are available to address employee turnover? How is the organization impacted by this turnover?

Background and Significance

The Central Florida geographical location of Haines City has earned the city the unique designation of the “Heart of Florida”. The city is located in a rapidly growing area of northeast Polk County and has a 2008 estimated population of 18,691 residing within 20 square miles (Joe Sortland, personal communication, January 8, 2009). Despite the recent economic downturn, Haines City is still expected to experience rapid development because of its close proximity to both Tampa and Orlando (Jane Patton, personal communication, January 9, 2009). This proximity, combined with ease of access to major roadways, rail transportation, and the future construction of alternate roadways to provide relief from local traffic issues, will continue to enhance the development and economic growth of Haines City (Paul Senft, personal communication, January 16, 2009).

Haines City government has an aggressive local growth and development plan which includes the continued annexation of properties within the city’s utility service area. This annexation plan is also responsible for the city’s recent recognition as the third largest city in Polk County (Jane Patton, personal communication. January 9, 2009). The plan, also known as the city view, has the majority of the city’s land newly annexed vacant land designated for residential use with a smaller portion of the acreage designated for commercial, industrial, or commerce park type development. The commerce park development concept combines commercial and industrial occupancies into one development. A portion of the southeast industrial area is serviced by a city owned railroad spur. The city expects the location of the railroad spur to attract additional commerce park type occupancies to this area.

The combination of increasing population, aggressive annexation, and economic development is projected to require additional fire and rescue services. HCF&R currently

employees 32 full-time paid personnel. There are five administrative personnel and 27 operational personnel who are certified Florida firefighters and licensed Emergency Medical Technicians (EMT's). Personnel provide fire suppression, first responder basic life support, public education, public information, fire prevention, and fire inspection services to Haines City residents.

All of these services are currently conducted out of a single station located in the downtown historic district. The manning for this station is 27 firefighters working a three platoon schedule with a 56 hour work week. Currently there are three vacant firefighter positions. The department has grown from 15 firefighters to 27 firefighters with the award of a 2005 SAFER grant in preparation for the construction of a second and third fire station (Lon Cheney, personal communication, December 22, 2008). The second station will be constructed near the current northern boundary while the third station will be constructed near the city's southern border on land donated to the city by a developer of a mixed usage community. There is no established time table for the construction of these stations.

Haines City Fire & Rescue has a history of inability to retain firefighters. From 1995-2009, the administration has dealt with 64 firefighter vacancies. This pattern of vacancies has the potential to impact the health and safety of both current and future employees by leading to increased fire ground injuries or even deaths. Residents are also be affected by this trend. Lack of fire ground experience and training can also lead to civilian deaths or injuries. The United States Fire Administration (USFA) has shown their commitment to reducing firefighter deaths by selecting this as their third of five priority operational objectives.

Successful mitigation of the HCF&R employee turnover trend has the ability to create positive outcomes for the organization. Future opportunities may include the ability to enhance

the current first responder BLS program with advanced life support (ALS) engines (Lon Cheney, personal communication, December 22, 2008). Interested employees would have the opportunity to attend paramedic school and receive additional wages for becoming a paramedic. The City of Haines City will benefit because of a reduction in the costs associated with employee turnover and residents will benefit because of enhanced services. These savings could then be used for wage or benefit adjustments to enhance the existing wage and benefit packages. These enhancements could assist with the retention of future employees. Current firefighters would benefit with the promotion and improvement of firefighter safety and training together with the development of additional HCF&R fire service leaders.

Literature Review

Benefits and pay packages also known as benefits and wages packages, are critical components of employee compensation (Byars and Rue, 2006). A typical employee benefit package may include paid sick time, paid vacation time, health insurance, dental insurance, disability insurance, life insurance, paid holidays, and a retirement pension (Byars and Rue, 2006). HCF&R in conjunction with the City of Haines City provides its employees with benefits as outlined in the city's personnel regulations and the department's best practice guidelines (BPG).

The *City of Haines City Personnel Rules and Regulations* (2003) were examined to determine the types of benefits available to firefighters. Employee benefits provided in accordance with these rules and regulations include a tuition reimbursement program, health insurance, dental insurance, paid holidays, pension plan, life insurance, sick leave, and vacation leave.

According to *City of Haines City Personnel Rules and Regulations* (2003)

Section 9.03, firefighters accrue sick leave at a rate of eight hours per month. Other city employees accrue sick leave at the same rate as firefighters. Haines City has a maximum amount of sick leave that may be accumulated. Sick leave may only be accumulated for a maximum of 112 days. Once an employee exceeds 100 days, they are compensated for the unused sick leave at a rate of ½ days pay for each day of accrued leave in excess of 100 days.

Section 9.02 of the *City of Haines City Personnel Rules and Regulations* (2003)

specifies how vacation leave is accrued. Firefighters who work a 56 hour work week accrue vacation leave at a different rate than general employees. Vacation leave is based upon years of continuous service for all employees. Firefighters with employment of less than 1 year to 5 years accrue vacation at a rate of 8 hours per month. A firefighter with 5 to 10 years of service accrues 9.33 hours per month. Firefighters with 10 to 15 years earn 12.00 hours per month. Those with 15 to 20 years of service earn 13.33 hours per month and employees with 20 or more years earn 16.00 hours per month. Firefighters with less than less than 10 years of continuous service may carry over a maximum of 160 vacation hours to the following year. A firefighter with more than 10 years of continuous service may carry over a maximum of 240 hours of vacation time to the following year. A firefighter's date of hire is the determining factor for the carry over of vacation times. If a firefighter resigns, he/she must give a minimum of a two week notice to receive payment for any accrued vacation time. This payment for accrued vacation time benefit is not provided to employees with less than one year of employment.

Some additional benefits provided to HCF&R employees are contained in the department's *Best Practice Guidelines* (BPG). ADM-2 contains an established re-hire or extra day roster policy for filling shift personnel vacancies for minimum manning. The only personnel

who are ineligible for the overtime assignments specified in ADM-2 are firefighters on trainee status and 40 hour administrative employees. In accordance with BPG ADM-25 firefighters may receive “comp time” in lieu of overtime pay in accordance with all applicable FSLA standards.

The City of Haines City pays insurance benefits for all employees in accordance with section 9.03 of the *City of Haines City Personnel Rules and Regulations* (2003). Additional out of pocket expenses occur for employees, who want insurance coverage for their family, employee and spouse, or employee and child. All city employees are paid every two weeks. Insurance expenses will vary from year to year.

It is mandatory for all full-time Haines City firefighters to participate in the Firefighters’ Retirement Trust Fund also known as the firefighter pension plan. The pension plan is established by local ordinance and is administered in accordance with applicable state and federal laws. Funding for the plan is generated by a combination of employee contributions, city contributions, and state premium tax refunds. Plan members contribute 9.0 percent of their salary as outlined in the HCF&R 2008-2009 budget (HCF&R 2008-2009 Adopted Budget, September 2008). A March 2009 vote by plan members reduced the employee contribution from 9.0 percent to 5.4 percent. This reduction was one of four pension plan improvements presented to and voted on by the firefighters (M. Baker, personal communication, March 3, 2009).

Haines City’s firefighter’s pension plan provides members with normal retirement benefits, early retirement benefits, disability benefits and death benefits. Normal retirement benefits allow employees to retire at age 55 with 10 years of service, or age 52 with 25 years of service, or age 60. Early retirement benefits are available for employees at age 50 with 10 years of service. Employees who select early retirement have their benefits reduced by 3.0 percent for every year prior to normal retirement. Normal and early retirement benefits are paid at 3.2

percent of the average final compensation salary multiplied by the years of service. The average compensation salary is calculated using the best five years during the ten years prior to retirement. Employees are vested at 100 percent after ten years of service.

A firefighter trainee at HCF&R receives a wage of \$26,023.80 (HCF&R 2008-2009 Adopted Budget, September 2008). HCF&R's (BOG) for firefighter trainees is ADM-26, "Firefighter Trainee." (Appendix C) This BOG provides a firefighter trainee with the required evaluation process necessary for moving from trainee status to a firefighter position. The base wage for a firefighter released from trainee status is \$32,604.64 (HCF&R 2008-2009 Adopted Budget, September 2008). Overtime is available in accordance with BPG ADM-2.

People are an important component of any organization. Successful organizations strive to maintain a low level of employee turnover because of its associated organizational impacts and costs (Bohlander and Snell, 2007). A review of human resource management literature describes the various organizational consequences associated with employee turnover and provides organizations with a formula to calculate their rate of employee turnover. To calculate the rate of employee turnover, the U.S. Department of Labor suggests that organizations simply divide the number of employees leaving the organization, in any given month, by the total number of employees working during that month (Bohlander and Snell, 2007). This number is then multiplied by 100 to determine a percentage (Bohlander and Snell, 2007).

Businesses analyze the total turnover cost associated with an employee leaving an organization by breaking this cost down into three distinct areas (Bohlander and Snell, 2007). Bohlander and Snell (2007) categorize these costs into "separation costs, replacement costs for the departing employee, and training costs for the new employee" (p. 90). These three costs are then added together to determine the total turnover cost. Examples of separation costs would

include the administrative costs for processing any required paperwork for the resignation. Employee replacement costs would focus on job advertisements, testing procedures, and interviews. Training costs would include costs associated with employee or training manuals, required educational programs, and employee salary and benefit costs while the employee is in training (Bohlander and Snell, 2007).

The current HCF&R employee hiring process was reviewed to assist with the establishment of separation, training and replacement costs. HCF&R does not have a human resource division so the city's human resource division assists the department with employee hiring, orientation, and resignations.

The separation costs would need to include HCF&R departmental costs and the city's human resource division costs. Departmental costs would include the processing of pension fund contributions, processing employee termination forms for Florida Bureau of Standards and Training, and calculating vacation and sick leave accruals (K.Miller, personal communication, January 9, 2009). City costs include the exit interview and final tabulations for sick and vacation leave accruals (C. Sutton, personal communication, January 9, 2009).

Employee replacement costs are also divided between HCF&R and human resources. These costs will include electronic and print job advertisements and an administrative review of all job applications. Current advertising costs are budgeted at \$600.00 (HCF&R 2008-2009 Adopted Budget, September 2008). Job applications are accepted by human resources and then forwarded to fire administration for review and additional processing (K.Miller, personal communication, January 9, 2009). Other HCF&R costs include a written test, applicant interviews, physical ability testing, drug testing and a physical examination (K.Miller, personal communication, January 9, 2009). Drug testing and physicals are scheduled through human

resources (C. Sutton, personal communication, January 9, 2009). All other processes are scheduled by HCF&R. A fee to sit for the written test is charged to the applicant (K.Miller, personal communication, January 9, 2009). Additional administrative costs associated with this process include letters to applicants who pass the screening process providing them with additional testing information. Applicants who are not selected for testing also receive a letter thanking them for their application (K.Miller, personal communication, January 9, 2009). Costs for a physical examination are approximately \$1,000.00 (C. Sutton, personal communication, January 9, 2009).

Additional replacement costs include personal protective gear, uniforms, return to duty pagers, and background checks. The estimated costs for uniforms, which also include physical training uniforms is \$800.00 (HCF&R 2008-2009 Adopted Budget, September 2008). A complete personal protective gear ensemble, including a SCBA mask, is estimated to cost \$3,000.00 (HCF&R 2008-2009 Adopted Budget, September 2008). Return to duty pagers are \$27.00 per year for each employee (HCF&R 2008-2009 Adopted Budget, September 2008). A background check, for those applicants who are offered a job, costs \$100.00 per employee (HCF&R 2008-2009 Adopted Budget, September 2008).

Departmental training costs for new HCF&R employees include a trainee booklet with skills check list, and an administrative orientation (K.Miller, personal communication, January 9, 2009). The human resources orientation focuses on employee benefits, city safety, and pertinent information contained in the city personnel policy handbook (C. Sutton, personal communication, January 9, 2009). HCF&R station commanders assign shift personnel to help new employees complete their trainee booklet requirements. Completion of the trainee booklet allows the firefighter to move from a trainee status to firefighter (K.Miller, personal

communication, January 9, 2009). Final testing for the firefighter position is conducted by the training officer (K.Miller, personal communication, January 9, 2009). The average time for a trainee to complete this program is 24 weeks (K.Miller, personal communication, January 9, 2009). Estimated HCF&R employee turnover costs can be calculated using data from both the City of Haines City 2008-2009 adopted budget and Haines City Fire & Rescue 2008-2009 adopted budgets.

Additional reviews of additional human resource management literature recommend the organizations establish a database, also known as a human resource information system (HRIS), as a tool to monitor trends in employee turnover (Byars and Rue, 2006). According to Byars and Rue, “turnover characteristics can be identified and analyzed for probable causes” with the use of the HRIS database (p.101).

All organizations need to focus on attracting potential employees who will become productive members of the organization (Nickels, McHugh, McHugh, 2005). To remain competitive, organizations need to value their employees so that they do not leave the organization (Nickels, McHugh, McHugh, 2005). Employees want financial security for themselves and their families. One way to accomplish this security is to provide employees with both retirement and insurance benefit (Nickels, McHugh, McHugh, 2005).

Byars and Rue state that “the key to a sound base wage and salary system is the establishment of different pay ranges for the various jobs within the organization” (p.262). The most common tools used by organizations to assist in the establishment of a base wage or salary system include wage surveys, job evaluations, job ranking, job grading, and point method (Byars and Rue, 2006). Employers can also use a combination of external and internal factors to assist them in establishing wages for a specific job (Bohlander and Snell, 2007). The external factors

can include cost of living, labor unions, labor market conditions and wage rates within the area (Bohlander and Snell, 2007). The internal factors can include job worth, employee relative worth, employer compensation strategy, and the ability of the employer to pay (Bohlander and Snell, 2007).

Employees will often judge the organization's salary system strictly on the base wage alone and not take into account various benefit packages (Byars and Rue, 2006). When employees feel that the base wage system is unfair, employee turnover can occur (Byars and Rue, 2006).

The literature review also discusses a compensation trend known as low salary budgets (Bohlander and Snell, 2007). Organizations using the low salary budget process will tend to experience high turnover, low production, or a combination of both because of their low wages (Bohlander and Snell, 2007).

Organizations will spend time and money to train and develop their employees because it helps the employee succeed in their job performance (Kinicki and Williams, 2003). Working in and with ever changing emergency situations requires that firefighters be trained for a wide variety of responsibilities. Through the years the scope of the fire service has changed to include emergency medical services (EMS) and planning for and responding to hazardous materials incidents (Grant & Hoover, 1994). To maintain their skills, firefighter training has always been a fundamental component of the fire service but it now takes on new meaning with the additional duties assigned and an employer commitment to maintain the health and safety of their employees (Forsman, 2003).

Over the years, training has evolved from strictly psychomotor activities such as those performed on a training ground to a combination of psychomotor and cognitive skills (Forsman,

2003). Not only do firefighters need to learn how to drive apparatus, they need to learn about the operations of an incident command system. Some of this knowledge based training is also conducted and regulated by state or federal agencies (Forsman, 2003). Local organization will provide their firefighters with “in-service” or “on-the job” training using their own system of best practices or standard operating procedures as their guidelines (Forsman, 2003). The necessary components for successful “on-the-job” training include coaching or mentoring and planned work activities (Kinicki and Williams, 2003).

Forsman lists the reasons for the establishment of firefighter training as “quality customer service, safe operations, effective use of modern technologies, efficient performance, and services that meet professional benchmarks” (p. 7-225). The National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) is responsible for the development various codes and standards to assist the fire service. One of the standards which require firefighters training to achieve various aspects of their job is NFPA 1500, Standard for Fire Department Occupational Safety and Health Programs (Forsman, 2003). Forsman summarizes the best reason to train “is to provide the high-quality customer service that customers expect from the fire and emergency services” (p. 7-225).

As part of HCF&R’s annual budget process, the fire chief submits a graph to depict the years of experience and training for all certified firefighters (HCF&R 2008-2009 Adopted Budget, September 2008). This a current roster graph graphically show the differences in training and experience levels for department employees. This year, the data for this annual roster graph was gathered in April and was compiled to produce the graph in Appendix D (K.Miller, personal communication, January 9, 2009).

Fireground activities subject firefighters to injuries or even death. On June 18, 2007, nine career firefighters from the Charleston Fire Department died in a furniture showroom and

warehouse fire (Nine career firefighters, 2009, February 11). These firefighters had a total of over 130 years of firefighting experience with associated training (Dewan, 2007). The investigation of this fire by the National Institute for Occupational Safety and health (NIOSH) provided all fire departments with a list of 42 recommended practices (Nine career firefighters, 2009, February 11). Of these 42 recommendations, seven involved training or training standards. These training or training standards recommendations focused on incident command system (ICS) training together with designated departmental standards for all employees who may serve as an incident commander, training for all firefighters so that they can effectively communicate deteriorating conditions during an interior attack, and training for all firefighters so that they can lessen the adverse affects of becoming lost or disoriented (Nine career firefighters, 2009, February 11).

NIOSH also recommended annual basic skill evaluations for firefighters along with skill evaluations for fire officers, training sessions with mutual aid departments or companies, specialized driver/operator/engineer training, and training in SCBA air management (Nine career firefighters, 2009, February 11).

A May 2009 study, released by NFPA, investigated the patterns surrounding the injuries of firefighters on the fireground for the period 2003-2006. Data for this study was compiled using the National Fire Incident Reporting System (NFIRS) (Karter, Jr., 2009). The injuries were classified as either moderate and severe or minor (Karter, Jr., 2009). The yearly average was 40,270 injuries on the fireground with 10,560 of these injuries classified as moderate and severe and 29,710 classified as minor (Karter, Jr., 2009). Extinguishment injuries, resulting in either minor or severe to moderate injuries produced an annual average of 20,870 injured firefighters (Karter, Jr., 2009). Searching for and rescuing victims accounted for a total of 1,225

moderate and minor injuries (Karter, Jr., 2009). Either an offensive or defensive fire mode of fire extinguishment, combined with other fireground rescue activities, requires coordinated fireground teamwork (Klaene and Sanders, 2003). Teams and teamwork are an integral component of fireground safety.

According to Lencioni, “the ultimate goal of the team...is the achievement of tangible collective outcomes” (p.37). The organizational structure of any career, volunteer, or combination fire department allows for the work load to be divided amongst the members (Paulsgrove, 2003). Paulsgrove states “the most successful organizations operate as a team” (p.7-11).

Lussier and Achua define a team as “a unit of two or more people with complementary skills who are committed to a common purpose and set of performance goals and to common expectations, for which they hold themselves accountable” (p. 296). According to Konopaske and Ivancevich, a team also exhibits “collective effort”. This characteristic is the single most important distinction between a group and a team (Konopaske and Ivancevich, 2004). Other important characteristics of a team include shared leadership roles, accountability and a common purpose (Kinicki and Williams, 2003). A group may evolve into a team but not before it goes through a development process (Kinicki and Williams, 2003).

The first stage of this team development process is known as forming (Kinicki and Williams, 2003). The team is in the process of getting to know one another, establishing the need for the team and the team’s goals (Kinicki and Williams, 2003). Team members do not exhibit much trust and will hold back information from one another until a leader (station or shift commander) steps forward to set the direction (Kinicki and Williams, 2003). It is critical that

station or shift commander allow team members time to become familiar with one another (Kinicki & Williams, 2003).

Storming is the second stage of the development process (Kinicki and Williams, 2003). This stage is where the unique personalities of each team member appear (Kinicki and Williams, 2003). As these personalities appear, so do conflicts, rebellion, and politics (Kinicki and Williams, 2003). The leader should encourage members to resolve conflicts by using open communication (Kinicki and Williams, 2003).

Stage three is the norming stage (Kinicki and Williams, 2003). Keynotes for this stage are the establishment of team conflict resolution and team relationship development (Kinicki and Williams, 2003). Team members have agreed upon their roles and will exhibit the necessary team spirit to achieve unity (Kinicki and Williams, 2003). In this stage, a leader will need to guide the team towards unity and the establishment of team values and goals (Kinicki and Williams, 2003).

The fourth stage is the performing stage (Kinicki and Williams, 2003). This is where the team actually sets out to accomplish their task (Kinicki and Williams, 2003). Problems that may delay the completion of a task are also solved (Kinicki and Williams, 2003). Problem solving allows tasks to be completed properly (Kinicki and Williams, 2003). In this stage the leader must empower his or her team (Kinicki and Williams, 2003).

The fifth and final stage is adjourning (Kinicki and Williams, 2003). This is where the team members transition into a demobilization process (Kinicki and Williams, 2003). This stage can be a difficult time for many members because they will feel a sense of loss (Kinicki and Williams, 2003). A leader can help members with demobilization by celebrating the efforts of the team (Kinicki and Williams, 2003). This can be accomplished by using awards and other

forms of celebrations for a job well done (Kinicki and Williams, 2003). Leaders can then help prepare the members for future team assignments by discussing the lessons learned from the team's efforts (Kinicki and Williams, 2003).

Building and leading a team is no easy task (Lencioni, 2003). It requires hard work plus extraordinary effort from both the members and the leader (Lencioni, 2003). Teamwork requires behavior modification which is not an easy task for either members or the leader (Lencioni, 2003). Other essential components of team building include establishing vulnerability-based trust, healthy conflict, unwavering commitment, unapologetic accountability, and collective orientation to results (Lencioni, 2003). Failure to successfully address any of these components results in significant obstacles for the team or even team failure.

Lencioni states that to become a functional team, members must “quickly acknowledge, without provocation, their mistakes, weaknesses, failures and needs for help” (§ 12). Recognizing the strengths of other members is also a strong component of establishing vulnerability-based trust (Lencioni, 2003). Vulnerability-based trust revolves around the ability of team members to know and acknowledge the strengths of the other team members (Lencioni, 2003). It also requires team members to admit their mistakes (Lencioni, 2003).

Recent research has shown that generational differences require different employee retention strategies (Shepherd, 2008, July). Generation X employees were born between 1965 and 1980 (Nickels, McHugh, McHugh, 2005). The Generation X employee values a flexible work schedule so that they can have more time off (Shepherd, 2008, July). Providing Generation X with this type of benefit helps with retention (Shepherd, 2008, July). These employees also value career security above job security and are willing to change jobs to achieve career security

(Nickels, McHugh, McHugh, 2005). Shepherd writes “70% of all workers are poised to leave their jobs, as either active job seekers or passive job seekers” (§ 11).

Generation Y employees were born between 1981 and 1994 (Nickels, McHugh, McHugh, 2005). These employees value career development, have a strong sense of commitment, and value technology (Shepherd, 2008, July).

Both Generation X and Generation Y employees want feedback and value communication (Shepherd, 2008, July). The literature review shows that a lack of communication with supervisors and management is one of the main reasons Generation X or Generation Y employees will leave their job (Shepherd, 2008, July). Other resignation reasons include money and no vision for the future (Shepherd, 2008, July). Generation X and generation Y employees need to connect with their leaders, want job empowerment and authority, and value individual interaction (Shepherd, 2008, July). For these employees Shepherd states “an HR truism holds that employees leave their bosses, not their jobs” (§ 10).

Businesses are beginning to address these generational issues by changing their policies to meet the needs of and allow for the differences that Generation X and Generation Y employees value (Shepherd, 2008, July). Competitive salaries, health insurance packages, pensions, and flexible benefits are all generational motivators for employee loyalty (Shepherd, 2008, July). Some examples of flexible benefits include provisions for donation of sick and vacation leave to other employees, ability to buy or sell back vacation time, shorter or flexible work weeks, extra holidays, and time off volunteer or community service (Byars and Rue, 2006).

The traditional fire service is structured as a paramilitary organization (Grant and Hoover, 1994). The rank structure, chain of command, and rules and regulation structure is vital to the successful mitigation of emergency situations (Grant and Hoover, 1994). Grant and

Hoover state “the paramilitary emphasis may limit the efficiency and effectiveness of daily operations” (p. 8). Modifications to this paramilitary structure are necessary so that newer management techniques can be practiced (Grant and Hoover, 1994). When fire service administrators embrace modern management techniques, employees can become the recipients of these changes through enhanced benefit packages.

The latter part of the 1980’s along with the early part of the 1990’s were change mechanisms for fire service administrators (Grant and Hoover, 1994). The fire service experienced a decrease in funding with an increase in demand for service (Grant and Hoover, 1994). This trend motivated administrators to establish mutual aid and automatic aid agreements with surrounding jurisdictions, consolidate smaller fire departments into county wide agencies, and coordinate cooperative training and purchasing practices among various agencies (Grant and Hoover, 1994). The fire service is no different than any other organization in that during times when finances are adequate or excess finances are available, funds can be allocated to help maintain the traditions of the fire service (Grant and Hoover, 1994). The opposite also holds true during times of financial difficulties (Grant and Hoover, 1994). Fire service administrators who create a culture of flexibility may find that this a valuable retention tool during both good and bad financial times.

Procedures

This applied research project used a descriptive methodology. The first process involved reviewing 64 personal files of employees who had left the organization to determine the exact reason or reasons for the HCF&R vacancies. These archived files were accessed through the current administration. If a specific reason for a resignation was given, these reasons were then grouped into categories. There were six reoccurring reasons for employees leaving HCF&R.

They were retirement, relocation, return to school, career change, hired by another agency, and no reason indicated. A table was then created to display the information graphically.

Employees who left HCF&R for employment with another fire agency accounted for 53 percent of the 64 vacancies. The examination process noted that all of the employees who went to other fire agencies left HCF&R to work for either a larger city or county department. Of the 34 firefighters who left to go work for another agency, nine work for Orange County, FL Fire Rescue.

The organizational research also showed that the specific reason or reasons for these employees leaving were wages, benefits or none specified. This information was then organized into a table. Benefits were listed by 38 percent of the employees as the reason they were leaving HCF&R to pursue employment with another fire agency. This data was also depicted graphically for ease of reference and would be used to answer the question why employees were leaving.

Once it was determined that benefits were a concern for resigning firefighters, a questionnaire was developed to gather medical and retirement benefit information from six fire departments in Polk County Florida (See Appendix A). These agencies were selected because they are all regulated by a city form of government, are within the boundaries of Polk County Florida, and their employees are enrolled in a 175 Florida Local Government retirement plan like HCF&R. Many larger city and county departments enroll their employees in the state high risk retirement plan instead of a local option plan. Data from this questionnaire was transferred into a retirement benefits table and an employee medical costs table as a tool for comparison with HCF&R benefits.

While this research was being conducted, five employees resigned or retired from the department. The two employees who had accepted positions with another organization agreed

to participate in the research by completing a questionnaire (See Appendix B). This information was summarized in the literature review.

The organizational review also focused on additional city and departmental documents. The department's best practices manual, current budget and the city personnel manual were reviewed to determine current benefit options and wages. The retirement data was then transferred into Table 3 and the medical expense data was transferred into Table 4 to compare the data with the other Polk County agencies.

Personal interviews were conducted with the city's human resource director and HCF&R's training officer to establish the employee hiring procedures presently used by the department. A review of both the City of Haines City 2008-2009 Adopted Budget and the HCF&R 2008-2009 Adopted Budget would help to establish the estimated employee turnover costs for the department.

The next part of the literature review focused on human resource management and employee turnover. This review produced an understanding of human resource management issues relating to employee turnover. It also provided formulas used to calculate employee turnover costs and the rate of employee turnover and encouraged the establishment of databases to analyze employee turnover trends. Table 5 shows the HCF&R turnover costs for a single employee as calculated using the formula found during the human resource management literature review.

Additionally, the human resource management review provided information regarding base wage or salary systems, benefit packages, low salary budgeting and employee training. Employee training was expanded upon to include research about firefighter training. Both lack of or inadequate training is a firefighter safety concern for current and future firefighters and the

public. The review process provided insights of how training issues contributed to the June 18, 2007 deaths of nine Charleston firefighters. Causes of firefighter injuries were also researched to address the safety impacts of firefighting. An April 2009 HCF&R department roster training and experience level graph was also reviewed for current levels of employee experience and training.

The last part of the literature review focused on management. Coordinated teamwork is an essential component of the fire service. Building teams takes time and

Results

Question 1: Why are employees leaving the organization?

The research discovered that of the 64 vacancies; only 14 percent of the former employees did not specify why they had decided to leave the organization. Table 1 classifies the reasons why these 64 former employees left HCF&R. A total of 34 former employees or 53 percent were leaving HCF&R and going to work for another fire rescue agency. Retirement accounted for 17 percent of those leaving and employees who chose a career change accounted for 11 percent. A return to school and out of state relocations accounted for 5 percent.

Table 1 – Reasons for vacancies 1995 – 2009

Reasons	Number of Employees
Returned to school	1
Relocated	2
Career change	7
Reason not specified	9
Retirement	11
Hired by another fire agency	34

The literature review emphasized how organizations should strive to prevent employee turnover because of associated costs and organizational impacts (Bohlander and Snell, 2007).

Additional research revealed that the 34 former employees who were going to work for another fire agency listed wages and benefits as their motivating factors for leaving HCF&R.

Table 2 – Reasons for employment with another fire agency

Reasons	Number of Employees
Reason not specified	7
Benefits and wages	7
Wages	7
Benefits	13

Of these 34 former employees, 38 percent listed benefits as their reason for leaving. Employee costs for medical insurance and retirement were the most frequently listed benefit concerns. Other benefit concerns included sick and vacation leave accrual rates.

A questionnaire was developed and then distributed to six other Polk County Florida city fire agencies to determine their employee contribution costs for medical insurance and 175 retirement benefits. Table 3 shows the 175 retirement costs by employee contribution and multiplying factor.

Table 3-Retirement contribution and multiplying factor

City	Multiplying Factor	Contributing Percent
Auburndale	3.5%	6.6%
Bartow	3.15%	1%
Lake Wales	3%	5%
Lakeland	4%	8%
Winter Haven	No Response	No Response
Haines City	3.2%	9%

HCF&R employees are contributing more of their salary for retirement benefits than other Polk County agencies. The average contribution is 5.15 percent of a firefighter's salary for the average benefit of a 3.41 percent multiplying factor.

The questionnaire was also used to determine employee contribution for medical insurance costs from the six Polk County agencies (Table 4).

Table 4 – Employee out of pocket medical costs per pay check

City	Individual	Employee & Spouse	Employee & Child	Family
Auburndale	NC	\$156.49	\$111.63	\$268.12
Bartow HMO	NR	NR	NR	NR
Bartow PPO	NR	NR	NR	NR
Lake Wales	NC	\$289.03	\$289.03	\$289.03
Lakeland	\$23.66	\$126.84	\$126.84	\$126.84
Winter Haven	NR	NR	NR	NR
Haines City	NC	\$212.77	\$185.72	\$376.46

NR = No Response NC = No Charge

The current benefit package for HCF&R employees includes a 175 retirement plan, sick leave, life insurance, disability insurance, vacation leave, and medical benefits for the employee, employee and spouse, employee and child or family. A HCF&R trainee firefighter is paid a wage of \$26,023.80. Once an employee leaves trainee status, they are paid a wage of \$32,604.64.

According to their questionnaires (Appendix B) the primary reason for the two employees who left the organization during this research project was not benefits. Instead, they listed management issues in the explanation portions of their questionnaires. These issues included communication, handling of various employee issues, treatment of employees by supervisors, and promotional practices. Both of these employees listed benefits as secondary reasons for leaving HCF&R.

Question 2: What are the safety impacts of employee turnover?

Employee turnover can create firefighter safety issues that can be linked to training. Efficient and effective training promotes safety and enhances firefighter performance (Forsman, 2003). Fire department administrators view the training process as their commitment to firefighter health and safety (Forsman, 2003). Employee turnover can weaken the skill level of firefighters by failing to train them adequately for the wide variety of fire department responsibilities (Forsman, 2003). This training must include a combination of cognitive and psychomotor skills to address the training requirements now regulated by state agencies, federal agencies, and NFPA 1500 (Forsman, 2003). Failure to train in and then apply these necessary skills can lead to firefighter deaths as revealed in the NIOSH investigation of the fire that killed nine Charleston Fire Department firefighters on June 18, 2007.

During 2003-2006, firefighters averaged 40,270 injuries per year (Karter, Jr., 2009). These injuries were further subdivided into severe or minor (Karter, Jr., 2009). Coordinated fireground teamwork is required to prevent deaths and injuries.

Question 3: What strategies or tools are available to address employee turnover?

Wages and benefits must remain competitive with the surrounding market. Tools available to organizations for establishing base wage and salary systems are wage surveys, job evaluations, job ranking, job grading, and point methods (Byars and Rue, 2006). A combination of internal and external factors will also assist with the establishment of wages for specific jobs (Bohlander and Snell, 2007).

Employees will often judge an organization on base wages and fail to take into account the various benefit packages also available (Byars and Rue, 2006). Employers should take the

time to explain all of the benefit packages available because health insurance packages, pensions and flexible benefits are excellent motivators for employee loyalty, especially for Generation X and Generation Y employees (Shepherd, 2008, July). Updating policies to reflect workplace flexibility issues such as donation of sick or vacation time to another employee, flexible scheduling, time off for community service work, and flexible work weeks can help address employee turnover (Byars and Rue, 2006).

Supervisors and leaders of Generation X and Generation Y employees need to understand that these employees need feedback, value communication, need to feel connected to their leaders, want job empowerment, need career development, and value individual interactions (Shepherd, 2008, July). They want career security more than job security and will change jobs to gain career security (Shepherd, 2008, July). The organization must also show Generation X and Generation Y employees that there is a vision for the future and that they are an integral part of the vision.

The paramilitary structure of the fire service is not designed to provide flexibility (Grant and Hoover, 1994). The chain of command works well on the fireground but has limitations for daily operations where flexibility is a keystone for modern management of modern employees (Grant and Hoover, 1994).

Valued and financially secure employees will become productive members of the organization (Nickels, McHugh, McHugh, 2005). Finding the right people, hiring them, training them, and providing them with career development will help them succeed and therefore reduce employee turnover (Kinicki and Williams, 2003).

Question 4: How is the organization impacted by this turnover?

All employees at HCF&R are impacted by employee turnover. The hiring process is time consuming for both administrative and operational employees. With high levels of turnover, firefighters and officers must undergo the team development process every time a new firefighter joins the organization (Kinicki & Williams, 2003). This is a time consuming process that requires hard work and behavior modification for both the leader and the team members (Lencioni, 2003).

Both HCF&R and the City of Haines City are impacted by the financial costs of employee turnover.

Table 5 – Estimated employee turnover cost for HCF&R

Total HCF&R administrative separation costs	\$ 63.00
Total City of Haines City separation costs	\$ 70.00
Total HCF&R replacement costs	\$ 7,250.00
Total City of Haines City replacement costs	\$ 335.00
Total HCF&R training costs	\$25,500.00
Total cost	\$33,218.00

Table 5 depicts the financial impact of the estimated employee turnover costs for a single employee of HCF&R. These costs were calculated using the formula separation costs + replacement costs + training costs = turnover costs found during the research. This year, five employees have left the organization and needed to be replaced at an estimated cost of \$166,090.00. This money could have used to help offset employee medical costs or enhance the pension plan.

Using the total amount shown in Table 5, the 34 employees who left the organization for other agencies have cost the city an estimated \$1,129,412.00. The 64 departmental vacancies have cost the city an estimated \$2,125,952 in turnover costs.

Discussion

The research conducted for this paper helped to define the reasons why employee turnover were occurring at HCF&R. An analysis of these reasons could then be used to help the organization make the necessary changes to retain current and future employees. A common theme throughout the research was that wage and benefit packages are critical components of employee compensation (Byars and Rue, 2006). The typical employee benefit package focuses on sick leave benefits, vacation leave benefits, medical insurance, dental insurance, disability insurance, life insurance, paid holidays and a retirement pension (Byars and Rue, 2006). Although HCF&R offers all of these benefits to their employees, the primary reason employee vacancies were occurring was because the employee costs for retirement pension and family medical insurance benefits was disproportionate to the present wage structure. The wage structure was a secondary reason for employees leaving HCF&R.

The research brought to the forefront some interesting facts about generational differences and their relevancy to benefits and wages. Employers who hope to retain Generation X and Generation Y employees need to develop new or revise their current retention strategies (Shepherd, 2008, July). Businesses have already begun to address these generational issues (Shepherd, 2008, July). To help keep employees, The City of Haines City and HCF&R should also start focusing in on these generational retention differences in relation to existing benefit and wage packages. Employees of these two generations view competitive salaries, medical

insurance packages, pensions, flexible benefits, and time off for volunteer work as motivating factors to stay with their current employers (Shepherd, 2008, July).

Generation X employees value flexible work schedules, time off, and value career security above job security (Shepherd, 2008, July). If an employer is not meeting or addressing these needs, they will change jobs (Shepherd, 2008, July). Because the fire service is a paramilitary organization, flexibility is not considered to be a key component of paramilitary structure (Grant and Hoover, 1994). However, fire service administrators need to promote flexibility as a useful management technique for both routine non-fireground activities and retention (Grant and Hoover, 1994). Flexibility may be one of most important retention methods to reduce HCF&R employee turnover.

Generation Y employees value career development and commitment (Shepherd, 2008, July). Communication with management and supervisors is important and when that is lacking, these employees will leave their job (Shepherd, 2008, July). Both generations need to connect with their leaders, seek job empowerment and authority, and believe that they don't leave their jobs; they leave their bosses (Shepherd, 2008, July).

The literature review produced two formulas commonly used by businesses to help analyze the organizational costs associated with employee turnover. Bohlander and Snell (2007) categorize the costs into "separation costs, replacement costs for the departing employee, and training costs for the new employee" (p. 90). These three costs are added together to determine the actual turnover costs. The research shows that these costs can have a substantial financial impact upon an organization with a high rate of employee turnover. The second formula expresses turnover rates as a percentage based upon total number employees and the number of employees leaving during any given month (Bohlander and Snell, 2007). For example, if

HCF&R had three employees leave in February 2009 and had 25 firefighters working, the turnover rate would be calculated at 12 percent for the month.

Safety and training are critical components for firefighter safety. High rates of employee turnover have the potential to negatively impact the team aspect of safety and training. Failure to come together as a team can lead to fireground firefighter injuries and deaths (Klaene and Sanders, 2003). The literature review emphasized that building teams is a complex process and never easy (Lencioni, 2003). Having firefighters come together as a team is a five stage development process (Kinicki and Williams, 2003). This development process begins with the forming stage which is where team members get to know each other and will not exhibit much trust until the leader steps forward to set the direction (Kinicki and Williams, 2003). The second, or storming phase, exposes the unique personalities of each team member (Kinicki and Williams, 2003). As these personalities appear, so do conflicts, rebellion and politics (Kinicki and Williams, 2003). Communication and conflict resolution are critical characteristics of this phase. Stage three is norming and is categorized by conflict resolution and the development of relationships (Kinicki and Williams, 2003). The performing stage, or stage four is where the team accomplishes their task (Kinicki and Williams, 2003). The fifth and final stage is adjourning (Kinicki and Williams, 2003). This team development process takes place every time there is a change in personal. High turnover levels make it difficult for teams to effectively achieve all the stages of development. Breakdowns and conflict can occur when team members fail to know and trust one another. To maintain firefighter safety, these conflicts need to be resolved before they ever reach the hazardous conditions of a fireground.

The research reinforced the important role training plays in firefighter job performance. Organizations are willing to spend time and money to train employees because it enhances their

skills and helps them to succeed (Kinicki and Williams, 2003). Training is also a commitment to employee safety because a firefighting career can involve injuries or even death.

Recommendations

The City of Haines City and HCF&R need to use this research and establish a joint partnership to address employee turnover. The focus of this partnership should be on helping both current and future employees achieve job satisfaction through benefits and wages. Input from employees regarding employee benefit preferences needs to be explored as a method to reduce employee turnover and increase job satisfaction. The city needs to explore flexible benefit plans to help decrease the out of pocket expenses for medical insurance. A firefighter trainee receiving a wage of \$26,023.80 currently must spend \$9,787.96 annually, or 37.6 percent of their wage, for family medical coverage. Examining the medical insurance benefit policies for the Polk County cities that have lesser employee costs can provide the city with suggestions for possible cost reductions. If finances are available, the city could also option to pay a percentage of family medical insurance in lieu of some other employee benefit.

The 3.6 percent reduction of the HCF&R employee retirement contribution factor from 9 percent to 5.4 percent helps to make the organization competitive with other Polk County cities. The retirement plan can also be enhanced by additional employee contribution reductions or the addition of a Deferred Retirement Option Plan (DROP). This plan allows employees who are ending their career to earn their salary while they collect retirement benefits. This practice can continue for up to 60 months. Additional reductions of the employee contribution can assist with the recruitment of new employees and help to retain existing employees while maintaining the current multiplying factor benefit.

Both benefit and salary surveys should be routinely conducted to keep abreast of current area trends. The last job classification survey was conducted in early 2006. This information was then used by an outside agency to develop a salary survey and reclassify the wage scale for various city positions, including firefighters.

To become more competitive in the job market, HCF&R should consider raising the wage for firefighter trainee by \$4,000.00. New employees with all their required certifications would still be required to complete the trainee program but the \$6,580.84 wage adjustment for completing this program would be reduced to \$2,580.84.

The department can also explore wage enhancement benefits or additional time off that can be linked to the successful completion of both departmental training and state certification training programs as an incentive to keep employee skills sharp. Using administrative and operational employees who are already instructor certified to teach classes can help defray the cost of this additional training. The development of new departmental training, officer training programs and refresher training programs, conducted on an annual basis will also enhance the safety of the firefighters by reducing injuries and preventing line of duty deaths.

A simple database would also be a useful tool for HCF&R to track costs and the specific reasons associated with current and future employee turnover. Monitoring reasons for turnover allows administrative personnel to research and develop plans to quickly address these issues.

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Appendix A
Retirement and Medical Benefits Questionnaire

1. What is the multiplying factor for your 175 Florida Local Government retirement plan?
2. What percentage of their wages do your employees contribute to this plan?
3. Do you have a Deferred Retirement Option Plan (DROP) plan?
4. Do you provide medical coverage for your employees?
5. If yes, is there a cost to the employee for medical coverage?
6. What is the amount?
7. Is medical coverage available for the employee's family?
8. If yes, what is the employee contribution?
9. Is medical coverage available for a spouse?
10. If yes, what is the employee contribution?
11. Is medical coverage available for employee and child?
12. If yes, what is the employee contribution?

Appendix B Organizational Satisfaction Questionnaire

1. Please rate your level of satisfaction with the following.

	5 - Extremely Satisfied	4 - Somewhat Satisfied	3 - Neutral	2 - Somewhat Dissatisfied	1 - Extremely Dissatisfied
Benefits	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Salary	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Opportunity for advancement	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Pension Plan	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Connection between Salary and Performance	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Additional information / explanation:

2. Please rate your level of satisfaction with each of the current employee benefits.

	5 - Extremely Satisfied	4 - Somewhat Satisfied	3 - Neutral	2 - Somewhat Dissatisfied	1 - Extremely Dissatisfied
Vacation Leave Policy	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Sick Leave Policy	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Educational Assistance	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Short/Long Term Disability	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Life Insurance	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Vision Plan	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Medical Plan	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Additional information / explanation:

Organizational Satisfaction Questionnaire

3. What is your primary reason for leaving the organization?

(Check One)

- | | |
|--|-----------------------|
| Salary | <input type="radio"/> |
| Benefits | <input type="radio"/> |
| Department Management | <input type="radio"/> |
| Policies and Procedures | <input type="radio"/> |
| Working Conditions (space, ventilation, etc) | <input type="radio"/> |
| Other (Please explain below) | <input type="radio"/> |

Additional information / explanation:

4. What is your secondary reason for leaving the organization?

(Check One)

- | | |
|---|-----------------------|
| Salary | <input type="radio"/> |
| Benefits | <input type="radio"/> |
| Department Management | <input type="radio"/> |
| Policies and Procedures | <input type="radio"/> |
| Working Conditions (space, ventilation, etc.) | <input type="radio"/> |
| Other (Please explain below) | <input type="radio"/> |

Additional information / explanation:

Appendix C
**CITY OF HAINES CITY
FIRE & RESCUE
STANDARD OPERATIONAL GUIDELINE**

No. ADM-26

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TO: All Fire & Rescue Personnel

DATE: January 5, 2000

INITIATED BY: Chief Lon H. Cheney

REVISED: April 9, 2008

SUBJECT: Firefighter Trainee

APPROVED BY: _____

GENERAL

Effective September 1, 1999, the Haines City Fire & Rescue was approved a new pay classification, Firefighter Trainee. This position was established for new employees of the Haines City Fire & Rescue who do not fully qualify for the Firefighter's position when hired, but will be able to comply with the City's job description for Firefighter within a maximum time frame of 12 months or as may be specified by the Fire Chief.

Firefighter Trainees must meet minimum qualifications before he/she can be advanced to regular firefighter status. Firefighter Trainees will receive a Firefighter Trainee Check-Off Sheet@ within their first week of employment. Firefighter Trainees not completing the check-off sheet within the time frame specified, may have their employment with the Haines City Fire & Rescue terminated.

(NOTE: The following criteria does not negate any part of the job description for Firefighter. Each employee must meet and/or comply with the job description as adopted and approved by the City Commission. Each employee must be able to perform the duty requirements of the job.)

Firefighter Trainees shall pass an evaluation process in order to acquire regular firefighter status. The evaluation process must be conducted prior to twelve (12) consecutive months of employment. The evaluation may be conducted with or without consultation with the Firefighter Trainee.

When a Firefighter Trainee has mastered a skill requirement on the Firefighter Trainee Check-Off Sheet, he must then demonstrate this requirement twice in the presents of a fire department officer with the rank of lieutenant or higher. The second demonstration can be no sooner than 24 hours after the last demonstration. When the Firefighter Trainee has demonstrated this requirement twice to the satisfaction of the reviewing officer (must be the same

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officer on both occasions), then the reviewing officer shall initial the Firefighter Trainee Check-Off Sheet@ on the line adjacent to the requirement. All requirements must be signed-off before the Firefighter Trainee can take the written and practical evaluation as specified in Section II, item 11 of this document and item 12 of the Firefighter Trainee Check-Off Sheet. The final written and practical evaluation shall only be administered by the Fire Department Training Officer. When all sections of the Firefighter Trainee Check-Off Sheet have been successfully completed and signed-off by an officer, the Firefighter Trainee shall be advanced to the position of Firefighter on a date specified by the Fire Chief.

EVALUATION PROCESS

The AFirefighter Trainee Check-Off Sheet shall consist of the following:

- I. The Firefighter Trainee must possess a valid certificate and/or license in the following areas:
 1. A State of Florida Certificate of Compliance for firefighter;
 2. A State of Florida or a National Registry Certification as an Emergency Medical Technician;
 3. A State of Florida drivers license
- II. The Firefighter - Trainee shall have a working knowledge and be proficient in the following:
 2. The Firefighter Trainee shall read and have a working understanding of the following:
 - a. Job description of a Haines City Firefighter Trainee
 - b. Job description of a Haines City Firefighter
 - c. Haines City Fire & Rescue Standard Operational Guidelines
 - d. City of Haines City Personnel Rules and Regulations (the green book)
 - e. Haines City Fire & Rescue Mission and Vision Statements
 - f. The Firefighter Trainee shall be required to sign the AFirefighter Trainee Check-Off Sheet indicating that he/she has read and understands how these documents apply to themselves and the job.

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2. The Firefighter Trainee shall successfully perform the following procedures using Haines City Fire & Rescue's self contained breathing apparatus (SCBA) ("Scott" 50 Plus).
 1. Donning (from apparatus jump seat and off the ground)
 2. Doffing
 3. Changing of the air bottle
 4. Routine SCBA and air bottle checking procedures and maintenance
 5. Basic trouble shooting (air leaks, defective equipment, proper seal, etc.)
 6. Emergency procedures
3. The Firefighter Trainee shall know the following for all department vehicles:
 1. Use of Apparatus Log Books and reporting procedures
 2. Inventory standardization
 3. Equipment location and usage
 4. Daily, weekly and monthly maintenance procedures
 5. How to fuel apparatus and equipment
4. The Firefighter Trainee shall know the Unit Designation (Call Sign) for all vehicles. (See SOG Com-2 Unit Identification)
5. The Firefighter Trainee shall know the location of major City thoroughfares and secondary roadways listed below.

PRIMARY

1. Hinson Avenue
2. East Hinson Avenue
3. US 17-92 and/or SR 600
4. East Johnson Avenue SR 580
5. Johnson Avenue
6. SR 544 or Scenic Highway
7. US 27 and/or SR 25
8. 10th Street
9. Old Polk City Road and/or SR 17

SECONDARY

1. Grace Avenue
2. Commerce Avenue
3. Ledwith Avenue
4. West Johnson Avenue
5. Mc Kay Drive
6. Robinson Drive
7. Baker Avenue
8. Jones Avenue
9. Alta Vista Drive

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- | | |
|-------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 10. Polk City Road | 10. Lee Jackson Memorial Hwy |
| 11. Alternate 27 and/or SR 17 | 11. Ponce De Leon Boulevard |
| 12. Peninsular Drive | 12. 5 th Street |
| 13. 30 th Street | 13. 6 th Street |

6. The Firefighter Trainee shall be able to:

- | | |
|---|---------------------|
| 1. Identify the following tools & equipment by name | |
| 2. Identify the location of each tool on specified vehicles | |
| 3. Describe the usage and maintenance of each tool | |
| 1. Flat head axe | 9. Hydrant wrench |
| 2. Rope hose tool | 10. Folding Ladder |
| 3. Pick head axe | 11. Roof Ladder |
| 4. Knox Pad Lock | 12. Sledge hammer |
| 5. Hydrant Assist Valve | 13. Pike Pole |
| 6. Hose clamp | 14. ADragon Slayer@ |
| 7. Cable (wire) cutters | 15. Halligan bar |
| 8. Bolt cutters | 16. Piercing Nozzle |

7. The Firefighter Trainee shall safely demonstrate the operation and/or evolution of the following:

1. Connect 5" hose to a hydrant with the Hydrant Assist Valve
2. Set up a deck gun on the ground from E-2 and T-1
3. Identify pre-connected hose loads by size, length and location, and demonstrate how to deploy and re-load
4. Start station generator and switch station over to generator power
5. Find a hot spot/area/device using the Fire Finder
6. Start, cut and shut down the K-12, Reciprocating and Chain saws
7. Set-up and operate the Hurst Tool & its accessories
8. Positive Pressure Fan
9. Demonstrate the use of Air Bags on cribbing while lifting an object
10. Setting up and operating auxiliary lighting
11. Requesting the Knox key and opening a Knox Box
12. Requesting the Knox key and override switch at gated community

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8. The Firefighter Trainee shall know the functions of a Haines City Fire & Rescue Dispatcher:
 1. How to communicate and operate the department telephone system
 2. How to communicate and operate the department radio system
 3. How to change over primary radio system to the backup radio system
 4. How to properly record information in the station log book, on dispatch forms and on callback slips
 5. How to efficiently use dispatching resources (phone books, roller decks, flip-ups, maps, map books, reference guides and posted notices)
9. The Firefighter Trainee shall be able to identify the location of primary structures and important areas within the City of Haines City:

1. City Hall	21. Jenkins Middle School
2. Post Office	22. Greenleaf Products
3. Haines City Chamber of Commerce	23. Lake Heather Hills
4. Claycut Building	24. Paver Modular
5. Police Department	25. Sun Orchard of Florida
6. Community Center	26. Heart of Florida Centre
7. Lake Eva Civic Center	27. Adams Building Materials
8. Dolphus Howard Complex	28. Old Scotty=s Building
9. Eastside Elementary School	29. Haines City Mall
10. Boone Middle School	30. Haines City Plaza
11. Alta Vista Elementary School	31. Hinson Plaza
12. Bathume Academy	32. Wal-Mart Super Center
13. Haines City High School	33. Royal Palm Village
14. Haines City Citrus Growers Asso.	34. Southern Dunes
15. Land Mark Baptist College	35. Lake Hammock
16. Land Mark Baptist Church Complex	36. Lake Elsie
17. North Ridge Church Complex	37. Lake Boomerang
18. St. Ann=s Church Complex	38. Lake Tracy
19. Public Works Complex	39. Lade Eva
20. Division of Motor Vehicles	40. Lake Joe

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10. The Firefighter Trainee shall be able to use the station computer system to perform the following functions:
 1. Understand basic computer terminology and identify system components.
 2. Activate the Incident Reporting System and enter incident reports, properly completing all sections of the report.
 3. Activate the Micro Soft Word and Excel programs; locate and properly fill out a Personal Action form and make an entry on his/her training record.
 4. Be able to create, save and delete a file.
 5. Be able to create and delete a folder.
11. The Firefighter Trainee shall successfully complete a written and practical evaluation of his/her ability to and knowledge of; the city, the fire department apparatus, the tools, and equipment, an understanding of City and Department policies, and the ability to perform general requirements of fire station duties.

EFFECTIVE TRAINING TECHNIQUES

No supervisor will assume that a newly-hired, newly-assigned, or reassigned employee knows all the correct procedures or applicable safety requirements that would allow him to immediately begin performing assigned work in a safe manner. THE EMPLOYEE MUST BE TRAINED. The four-point method of job instruction (Preparation, Presentation, Performance and Follow-up) has been found to be an effective method for conducting employee training:

I. Preparation

- A. Put them at ease.
- B. Define the job and find out what employee already knows about it.
- C. Get them interested in learning their job.
- D. Place them in a safe posture in relation to the work zone or station.

II. Presentation

- A. Tell, show and illustrate one important step at a time.
- B. Stress each key point.
- C. Instruct clearly, completely and patiently but cover no more than what the employee can master each time.

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III. Performance

- A. Have them do the job; coach them while they work.
- B. Have them explain each key point to you as they do the job again.
- C. Make sure they understand. Continue until YOU know they know.

IV. Follow-up

- A. Next working day have employee instruct YOU on how to do the job.
- B. If employee does not perform satisfactorily, go over troubled areas again and go back to item "A" this paragraph.
- C. If employee performs satisfactorily, document appropriately.
- D. Designate to whom they go to for help.
- E. Check frequently; encourage questions.
- F. Taper off extra coaching and close follow-up.

Appendix D

